

State Senator • Irma Clark-Coleman

Serving the 3rd District Constituents in Detroit, Dearborn & River Rouge

Detroit Schools Governance

When the State of Michigan took over governance of the Detroit Public Schools in 1999, legislators promised parents, voters, and residents that, after five years of imposed rule, Detroiters would decide whether to keep the state-run reform board of education or return to a fully elected board like the other 544 public school systems in the state.

Public Act 10 of 1999 essentially suspended the powers and duties of the elected school board of the Detroit Public Schools and instead authorized a seven-member school reform board appointed by the mayor.

The reform board was authorized to appoint a chief executive

officer for the school district. The Act further required that the question of whether to retain the new system be put before voters after five years. Specifically, it required the question to be placed on the ballot for the November 2004 general election.

If voters elected to retain the appointed school board & CEO, and the authority of the mayor to appoint the board, the question would not be put on the ballot for another five years. If the voters chose not to retain the appointed board, an election would be held to elect a new school board, which would become the governing board of the school district by July 1, 2005.

continued on page 2

How to Contact Me

Lansing Office

P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Toll-Free: 1-866-747-7803

Phone: 517-373-0990

Fax: 517-373-5338

Dearborn Office

4407 Roemer Street
Dearborn MI 48126-3485

Phone: 313-584-3749

Fax: 313-584-3937

E-Mail

seniclark-coleman@senate.
michigan.gov

Website

www.senate.michigan.gov/
clark-coleman



Four Tops Day: Sen. Irma Clark-Coleman (first on left) pays tribute to The Four Tops during a special presentation at the State Capitol declaring May 26, 2004, as Four Tops Day. Abdul "Duke" Fakir (center), Renaldo "Obie" Benson (far right), and Levi Stubbs (seated) received accolades from the Senator. Stubbs' wife, Clineice (second from left), and Yone Payton (second from right), widow of original group member Lawrence Payton, joined the Motown hit makers for the ceremony in Senate Chambers.

A Note From Senator Irma Clark-Coleman



Dear Constituent:

Our state faces several challenges as we work toward balancing the budget for FY 2005. Legislators and Governor Granholm have been meeting over the summer to finalize the budget that will eliminate the projected deficit through cost-cutting and revenue stream measures.

While controlling costs, we must maintain public programs meant to help citizens who need a boost. I will continue to represent you and your interests. I believe that if we meet the needs of the least of us, the entire state will benefit.

At this writing, lawmakers have already taken some steps to balance the budget and fill funding gaps. For instance, we have increased taxes on cigarettes to fund Medicaid spending and we've increased the tax on casinos to help fill the overall state budget shortfall. I am confident the Legislature will balance the budget as it did for FY 2004. As the state economy rolls to recovery, this process should run smoother.

As always, I urge you to educate yourselves politically and to participate in the process. If you have any questions or issues in your neighborhood, please contact my office.


Irma Clark-Coleman
State Senator • 3rd District

Detroit Schools Governance *Continued from page 1*

Rather than allowing the Act to run its course and placing the question of an elected versus appointed board on the ballot this November, a new compromise bill

became law on August 10, 2004. Detroit voters will now choose between returning to the traditional system of a fully-elected school board with all

governing rights or a mayorally-appointed CEO and an elected school board with limited powers.

Sen. Clark-Coleman voted **NO** on the compromise bill (HB 4508).

Compare Choices

Traditional, Elected Board With Superintendent	Elected Board With CEO
11 members (4 at large; 7 districts)	9 members elected by districts Districts determined by elections officials and federal census
Approve all contracts within the district	Review contracts over \$250,000 (cannot approve) Cannot override contract decision by CEO
No mayoral input on Superintendent selection	Mayor nominates CEO and can fire with majority board approval
Review and approve annual budget submitted by Superintendent of schools	Review and approve annual budget and procurement goals submitted by the CEO
Board has full control over hiring and firing of Superintendent of schools	Annually evaluate CEO May contract with an independent auditor
Board has complete authority over school district operations including:	Board has no authority over school district operations including:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expenditure of all funds including bond and capital projects• Collective bargaining and employment contracts• Prosecution and defense of litigation• Obligations under judgments• Delegation of authority to designees• Board has the same general powers as all other school districts in Michigan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expenditure of all funds including bond and capital projects• Collective bargaining and employment contracts• Prosecution and defense of litigation• Obligations under judgments• Delegation of authority to designees• Board does not have the same general powers as other school districts in Michigan
Board could be seated by January 1, 2006	Board could be seated by January 1, 2006

Clark-Coleman Honors WCCCD President

Senator Clark-Coleman was on hand when Detroit’s political and educational leaders paid tribute to Wayne County Community College President, Dr. Curtis L. Ivery. Dr. Ivery was selected as a recipient of the National Excellence in Leadership award.

The Senator is a kindred spirit to the self-described education advocate as they both have dedicated their lives to the education and uplifting of all who seek knowledge.

Dr. Ivery has achieved a laundry list of accomplishments. Under his tenure, more than 32,000 Detroit Metro residents have chosen WCCCD as their academic home. Dr. Ivery and his staff have improved campus buildings, updated courses, and have stressed greater customer service.

WCCCD has added more than 60 new programs including pharmacy tech, paralegal, dental hygiene, veterinary technology, nursing, and law enforcement/criminal justice. Just this past winter, the community college

district agreed to purchase the University of Detroit Mercy’s Outer Drive campus.



Detroit Oil Refinery Gets Boost From State

Senator Clark-Coleman recently announced Michigan Department of Transportation’s Office of Economic Development and Enhancement’s grant to Marathon Ashland Petroleum (MAP), the only operating oil refinery in Michigan.

The award, totaling \$205,380, supports facility improvement, increased refinery output to 100,000 barrels of oil a day, and retention of 302 employees.

MDOT gives monetary support to projects that retain Michigan jobs and provide the greatest return on investment through its Transportation Economic Development Fund.

“Keeping our residents working is the number one goal of the Legislature, the Governor’s office, and our corporate partners,” Senator Clark-Coleman said. “I am well pleased that hundreds of Michiganders will retain their

jobs while our state expands MAP’s role in the energy industry.”

The Detroit-based refinery processes 74,000 barrels of oil a day. Its products include gasoline, diesel fuel, jet fuel propane, and asphalt.

The first phase of improvements will consist of reconstruction of cross-overs in front of the building, spot repair, pavement milling, and adjustments to the drainage structures.

Clark-Coleman Appointed to Cherry Commission

Governor Jennifer Granholm appointed Senator Clark-Coleman to the Cherry Commission on Higher Education and Economic Growth. The Commission is charged with finding ways to double the percentage of Michigan citizens who earn college degrees.

Headed by Lt. Governor John Cherry, the Commission boasts 40 of the top education advocates in the state. Senator Clark-Coleman, Minority Vice Chair of the Senate Education committee, is a former member of the elected Detroit Board of Education and currently sits on the National Education Commission.

“I accept the Governor’s charge and will use all of my knowledge and experience to increase the number of our state college graduates,” Senator Clark-Coleman said. “There are some wonderful people on the commission and I am sure that, as a group, we can get the job done.”

The Commission held its first organizational meeting on Wednesday, July 14. In September, the Commission will hold statewide hearings on the issue.





State Senator
Irma Clark-Coleman

P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536



PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LANSING, MI
PERMIT NO. 1200

Fall 2004

Toll Program Toughens Lawmakers

Senator Clark-Coleman, the sole legislator from Michigan to be awarded a fellowship, joined 50 other lawmakers from across the country this past summer to hone their leadership skills at the prestigious Toll Fellowship program in Lexington, KY. With a focus on risk taking, confidence building, and personal satisfaction, the program is fully funded by the Council of State Governments, a national organization. The week-long experience grouped together Democrat and Republican public servants to explore how groups

communicate, identify and solve problems, make decisions, and resolve conflict.

One component used by program facilitators included a rope challenge course at Ashley College grounds in Wilmore, KY. All participants were required to push themselves beyond their limits with the help of their colleagues, who during the entire program were encouraged to disregard their political affiliation. “There were Democrats helping Republicans and vice versa,” Clark-Coleman said. “In the end

we learned that with understanding we can work through any issue.” Senator Clark-Coleman found herself 100 feet in the air with a pulley and harness being the only way of making it to the ground. She first walked across a log and a tight rope before finally zooming across a pulley-drawn rope. As she zoomed across the rope, guess who was waiting on the ground to help her recover? Senator Clark-Coleman won’t say, but it was another lawmaker who looked fear in the face and called the Senator friend.



Facing Fear: Senator Clark-Coleman showed that she could handle any legislative debate after climbing 100 feet in the air and sliding down on a wire.